(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) No, Sir. No such report has been received.

(b) Does not arise.

Sirpur Archaeological Complex

1425. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a 1500 year old city, complete with a palace, temples, houses and Buddhist educational centre big enough to accommodate 10,000 students has been discovered at Sirpur, in Chhattisgarh;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether it is a fact that the Sirpur Archaeological Complex is almost four times as big as Nalanda?

THE MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) and (b) The excavations carried out so far at Sirpur, Distt. Mahasamund, Chhattisgarh, have brought to light remains of an extensive city datable to *circa* 6th-9th century A.D. The city contained, among other things, remains of a large Buddhist monastic complex comprising a sanctum sanctorum, a sixteen pillared hall, and ten monk's cells. The complex has preserved evidence of rich carvings depicting scenes from the life of Buddha, amorous couples, floral and animal designs besides *kirti-mukh* motifs.There was no discovery of a large educational centre capable of accommodating 10,000 students.

(c) Since the excavations at Sirpur are as yet inconclusive, it will not be appropriate to make comparisons with Nalanda.

Setting up of Science City

1426. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of science cities set up/proposed to be set up in the country together with its aim and scope;

(b) whether all the States would be covered under this scheme so as to have cross-cultural interactions through these science cities; and

(c) the funds allocated for this purpose during the current year?

THE MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) A Science City was established in Kolkata in 1997. The other Science Cities which are under process of being established with central assistance are:—

1. Pushpa Gujral Science City, Kapurthala

2. Science City, Ahmedabad.

3. Regional Science City, Lucknow.

The main objective of the Science City is to popularize science and technology and to inculcate a scientific temper amongst students in particular and masses in general, through a wide range of activities and interactive programmes.

(b) It is the endeavour of Central Government to set up Science Cities in different States of the country. However, the State Governments have to initiate the proposal of setting up Science City, and based on the merits of each case, pro-rata financial assistance is provided by the Centre.

(c) A sum of Rs. 20.00 crore has been allocated under Science Cities for the current year.

Implementation of project schemes for NER

1427. SHRI NABAM REBIA: Will the Minister of DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH EASTERN REGION be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the major scheme being undertaken/proposed to be undertaken by the North Eastern Council (NEC) in NER during the Tenth Five Year Plan period sector-wise;

(b) whether the NEC has devised a full proof mechanism to evaluate, monitor and ascertain progress of the implementation of such schemes in the region; and

(c) the role of the State Governments in finalisation and implementation of such projects?